ABSTRACT

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

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CORRELATION OF SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SED ADOLESCENTS

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This study was designed to determine the range of relationship between self-concept and academic achievement adolescents. The primary questions addressed were (1) What was the range of this correlation, and (2) Did this study support other literature on self-concept and achievement? A correlation analysis was used to obtain results because it gives an association between two variables. The students tested qualified for an SED adolescent program due to chronic behavioral problems. Out of a total population of 36 students, twenty-seven obtained written permission to take part in a self-concept survey. The Piers-Harris Self-Concept Survey is a self-report inventory of 80 statements answered by the students. The test uses a scale range of 0 to 80 with 80 representing a higher self-concept level and a percentile of 31st to 60 percent representing average self-concept scores. After the self-concept scores were obtained, they were

correlated with each student grade equivalent score obtained from the PIAT-R. A correlation analysis was done on each student's self-concept score and grade equivalent score.

The results indicated a very low but positive correlation existed between self-concept and achievement.
The results also supported former literature suggesting that a correlation does exist, but further research is recommended on a larger population.

THE CORRELATION OF SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SEVERELY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED ADOLESCENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Self-concept is a term that has been used over and over in the literature. The self is a difficult variable to understand because what one thinks about himself or herself can be changed over night. Adolescence is a time that is characterized by changing experiences and emotions, that can be productive as well as devastating. Society alone cannot be blamed for all that happens to its members.

However, the student's self understanding can help produce a more productive member of society. The school sometimes fulfills a role that parents neglect. Developing and maintaining a positive self-concept is sometimes difficult and almost impossible under the wrong conditions. The school, therefore, being one of the agencies that develop people into better human beings, must provide a good atmosphere for creating a healthy self-concept. Teachers and administrators must know the importance of good self-concept and be aware of its effect upon academic achievement. Although research suggests that the self-concept can help as well as prohibit academic success, the implication of its importance is worth being knowledgeable about as well as creating an environment for its growth within the schools.

As long as the self-concept can affect the learning process, it must be given a chance for growth within the schools. The educational experience must reflect the variables that impact upon successful learning. We as educators should focus on making these changes as we see fit. In today's society, individualization is dominant. People must rely upon themselves. In order to be successful, students need to be in an environment where they can cope with failure as well as success and still feel good about themselves so they can still be good productive members of society.

The self-concept of special children is just as significant as it is for all children. If any correlation between self-concept and success in school exists, it should be reflected in the curriculum and programs within the schools. Educators and administrators need to be cognizant of the impact it can have on every phase of an individual's life.

The self-concept should continuously be a part of the curriculum, because the self-concept is a reflection of everything one does. Perhaps academics may need to take a back seat to the self-concept, thus making the self-concept first priority in the curriculum and school program. Presently, today's students experiencing all the testing and the back to basic syndrome still have not been academically productive. Something is not working within the school environment. This research will examine the significance and

importance of the self-concept as it relates to academic achievement among special severely emotionally disturbed students (SED).

Rationale

The issue of teacher accountability has received considerable attention in the literature as it relates to improving academic standards for students. This issue of teacher accountability has spurred educational systems across the country to recommend stronger approaches to learning for all students.

Some major concerns of researchers in education have been 1) What variables affect learning?, and 2) How do these variables affect the level of achievement? The self-concept has often been cited as a variable that may affect the level of achievement and learning and is currently receiving a significant amount of attention in the literature. Studies involving the self-concept range from focusing on social comparison--theory as a factor that affects self-concept to focusing categories of exceptionalities such as the gifted, learning disabled, etc., and their impact upon the self-concept and academic achievement. In addition, there may be many studies that suggest that correlations exist between self-concept and academic achievement as there are that refute this statement. However, if educators are interested in finding methods of improving learning, additional research relating to the impact of self-concept and its relationship to

achievement should enhance future research and provide more insight on this subject. Studies that address this topic would also reduce questionable opinions that have plagued the schools over time. One question that comes to mind would be 1) Does self-concept improve as academic achievements improve or vice-versa? Interest in this topic evolved from past experiences in workshops and classes that have focused on self-concept and learning. These workshops have emphasized that academic achievement automatically improves the self-concept. Reading various literature on this subject has also enticed my concern with this issue.

The importance of self-concept and achievement is worthy of further investigation due to the generalizations and conflicting data that have emerged from the literature. The self-concept is a variable that is affected by many things. Academic improvement may or may not play a part in an improved self-concept.

Statements such as telling students or parents that as one's grades improve, the self-concept will improve is not justifiable today. There may be studies that refute this statement. This is another fallacy that has led to this research. Perhaps educators and administrators should become more knowledgeable about this variable that affects learning and study the extent of its impact before passing this information along to others.

Statement of the Problem

Today, several factors impact upon students' self-concept. With the break up of today's nuclear family, one's grades may not be an instrument that influences the self-concept. The self-concept, societal's changing values, and false internal concepts impacts upon one's total self worth. The problem with self-concept is that it can mean different things to different people. Yet it impacts upon us all. Within the school's setting the self-concept is always associated with grades or test scores. Is this association appropriate today? Some people today even questions the validity of test scores and the grading system.

Conflicting opinions about test scores and grading, lends itself to questions like 1) Is it appropriate to attribute self worth to one's test scores? 2) Do test scores or grades positively influence the self-concept? Schools today need to investigate this association if they want to make adequate judgments when counseling students.

Some handicapped students have enough stigma on them without associating their grades with their self-concepts. This is a practice that has been used for years. Telling parents in conferences or counseling sessions that their child's self-concept will improve as their grades improve may be a myth. In fact, their self-concept may or may not be even related to their test scores. Today, test scores are

emphasized more than the individual. Perhaps society needs to reverse this trend.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between academic achievement and self-concept of severely emotionally disturbed adolescents in a psycho-educational setting. Some research suggests that the self-concept appeared to be affected by age, peer group, and sex. However, no hard data has been drawn to justify the effects of this influence. Specifically, this study will investigate the correlation between severely emotionally disturbed (SED) adolescents self-concept and academic achievement level in a psychoeducational setting. Research questions investigated were: 1) What is the range of the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of SED adolescent educated in a psychoed center? 2) Does age have an impact on the self-concept of those students? 3) Does this study support other research on achievement and self concept?

Null Hypotheses

Hypotheses generated for the study were:

H_1: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of severely emotionally disturbed adolescents.

H_2: Age does not have a significant impact on the self-concept of SED students.

Definitions of Terms

Achievement Level--Achievement level will be measured using a standardized test converted to grade point average to determine the amount of cumulative information students have obtained within a school setting.

Self-Concept--Is the ability to be able to tell how one feels or believes, about him or herself usually based on some significant other.

Grade Equivalent--A derived score converted from a raw score from a standardized test divided into tenths expressed in terms of grade equivalent (Gipe 1991).

Psychoeducational Center--is a center for the severe range of behavior disordered students who after being placed in a regular school setting could not function academically or behaviorally in that setting to obtain an adequate education.

Percentile Rank--designates the percentage of cases in a student's grade or age group that scored above or below him (Stanley, Hopkins, Hopkins 1990).

SED--Federal and state education agencies have had the responsibility of identifying Behavior Disordered Students who are handicapped by virtue of behavioral deviance. At such levels the federal agency has referred to the students as "severely emotionally disturbed" (SED). According to Public Law (P.L.) 102-476 SED is a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over long periods of time and to a marked degree which adversely affect educational

performances. These areas are 1) inability to achieve in school that can't be explained by sensory or health factors, 2) an inability to establish and keep satisfactory interpersonal relations with peers and adults, 3) display of inappropriate feelings under normal circumstances, 4) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and 5) a tendency to develop physical symptom such as pain or fear associated with personal or school problems. This definition does not include the socially maladjusted child although he or she may display some of these behaviors. However, it does include children who are schizophrenic or autistic (Hardman, Drew, Egar, Wolf 1993).

Educational Significance

Self-concept is a term that is related to every aspect of a student's behavior. It can emerge at different stages in any student. This variable should make teachers and administrators aware of its effect on achievement and behavior management. Self control is an outgrowth of experiences. The school is one of the avenues whereby the self-concept must be nurtured in the proper manner to produce healthy self-discipline, thus enabling more academic producing time. The skills needed to enhance this perspective must be created in every professional educator. When the teachers are provided with better skills on behavior management techniques which does not diminish the self-concept, better management within the classroom, provides better opportunity for social and

academic growth. Developing good self-concept skills can therefore be a skillful tool that teachers should be familiar with, and can also be used as a useful inservice program. The acknowledgement of a good self-concept and the impact it can have on students' lives as well as teachers' lives can entice remarkable advantages when using motivational skills. The self-concept is related to self-discipline, motivation and academic success, therefore, its significance to school advocates and researchers are beneficial. Any variable that encourages discipline, skill adaptation and enables one to function better in a society, also promotes better educational opportunities and achievements for all.

Description of Instrument, Subjects and Procedures

This section gives a brief description of the population under study, the instrument used to calculate the research portion of the data, and the procedures used to gather that information.

The population under study was severely emotional disturbed adolescents housed at a psychoeducational center due to the severity, frequency and duration of their behavior problems. These are children who could not function in a normal school setting based on a series of teacher observation, psychological testing, their social history and a series of other state tests that are required in order to be placed in a psychoeducational center. All students tested

qualified for the adolescent program at the Psychoeducational Center.

The director of the Psychoeducational Center gave permission to the researcher to give a self-concept scale to students who had obtained written permission from their parents to participate in this research. Then as written permission from parents were gathered, a scheduled time for groups of 9 students at a time were set up to take the self-concept scale at the Center.

The instrument used was the Piers-Harris Self-Concept scale. It is a self report scale that is made up of 80 declarative statements. Sentences are written at the third grade level, both positive and negative statements are included. Students responded by circling "yes" if they felt that the statement described them, a "no" if they felt the statement did not describe them. Raw scores on the test range from 0 to 80 with higher scores indicating more positive self-concepts (Piers, Harris 1984). The investigator explained the above statement to the students orally, then they were allowed to take the test in small groups. Individual oral reading by the investigator was done for students who preferred it. All test sheets are confidential. Students were told that the numbers were used to distinguish results not to identify them.

The data collected was analyzed by compiling the

self-concept scale raw score and the Peabody Individual Achievement Test Revised (PIAT-R) total test score.

The PIAT-R is an educational test used to provide an assessment of achievement levels in six subject areas (Markwardt 1989). The PIAT-R test scores were converted to grade equivalent scores for further interpretation.

A correlation analysis was used to determine if there was a relationship between the two variables, grade equivalent and self-concept.

Then a correlation coefficient was conducted to determine the range of that relationship. This test allowed the investigators to determine the strength of the relationship and, denote if it was negative or positive. The formula for calculating this statistic is such that results will always be a number between -1.00. and +1.00. Positive numbers suggest as one or two factors increase, the other decreases. The greater the number that's obtained departs from 0.00 in either direction the stronger the relationship may be. Correlation coefficients only tell the strength of relationship, not the cause.

Limitation of the Study

The measure of self-concept is complex. There are a variety of things or variables that impact upon it. One of these things are the self-concept scales used to measure the self-concept. Questioning on self evaluation instruments are given and people have a tendency to answer the way they think

you want them to. Sometimes exaggerated answers are given, distorting the true perception of themselves. Age, sex, maturity and race are also variables that impact upon the self-concept and academic achievement in this study. Some of these variables we could not control due to the small number of students educated at the psycoeducational center. Although the sample size is small, it represented 75 percent of the total adolescent population.

Another limitation reflects the statistics that state there are more boys in psycoed programs than girls. This will also reflect upon the generalization ability of the results of this study. Perhaps using a larger psycoeducational facility which would let you control some variables without limiting your study would yield different results.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Self-concept is a variable that changes and evolves with a variety of other variables. Many researchers have examined the self-concept in a variety of school settings and have come to a variety of conclusions. Many correlations of self-concept and academic achievement have been reported in the literature. Caution was suggested by earlier researchers on self-concept and any academic achievement levels due to the variety of other social and environmental factors that may impact upon some students and not others. The self-concept and school achievement is still being widely investigated among normal and exceptional children. This is an overview of some of these studies.

Numerous studies have reported relationships between the academic achievement and self-concept of children (Purkey 1970). One early study reported a significant relationship between the self-concept and academic achievement. According to Black (1974), former studies have failed to find any significant relationship between academic achievement and self-concept. The literature also cited that even when a relationship was reported between these two variables, the correlations were low (Lewis 1972). Researchers have failed

to identify a problem in the self-concept/academic achievement studies because they have made the assumption that the environment and psychological factors have not been manifested with this relationship. Generally, the research suggest that little attention has been paid to the social environment of the child, and that factor alone could influence a relationship between self-concept and academic achievement. One study by Roger, Smith and Coleman (1978) derived from the social comparison theory, stated that the relationship between academic achievement and self-concept can be better understood in light of the child's achievement standing compared to that of his classmates. The results of that study showed that when relative within classroom achievement standing was considered both reading and math achievement was significantly related to self-concept. The study also suggested that the social environment, was more important than how the person perceives his standing in terms of academic achievement.

In light of the early research, one would consider that students' perception of how they are achieving academically would impact upon their self-concept. Also, students who are restricted to certain schools might have as much of a positive self-concept as students who are in the normal school setting.

If this is the case, perhaps academics may not be a good indicator of a positive self-concept.

Studies on the self-concept/academic achievement are numerous. There are many variables that have been considered

when conducting such research. However, it is impossible to control all variables. Since people are different, there can be as many different variables that impact upon people in different ways and at different times. Therefore, the self-concept and academic achievement may only be slightly related when testing some people and heavily related when testing others.

Yates (1975), reported that students who are considered academically smart possess all the qualifications for having a good self-concept, this isn't always true. In his study on academics and self-concept of the gifted the researcher reported that in contrast to their positive academic self-concepts, gifted students, males and females, seem to possess relatively poorer social self-concepts. One reason stated for this may be, that the academics have received all the attention for these students, thus almost diminishing the social development of the students. Former studies in the literature suggest there is a void in the curriculum for the social development of children and some other researchers have failed to show any substantial relationship between academic achievement and self-concept (Wattenber and Williams 1978).

In predicting self-concept of learning disabled (LD) children, variables often cited were verbal I.Q. and reading performance. These variables showed little relationship to self-concept according to Purkey (1970). However, in the same study when social economic status (SES), word knowledge and

math were used they were found to be predictors of self-concept as it related to better academic performance.

Studies on race as a variable affecting self-concept demonstrated that black children in general do not have lower self-esteem than white children (Fritz 1973).

Similar research which focused on the relationship between self-concept and success in school suggested that there must be someone significant in the student's life to influence the self-concept. Sometimes teachers play the role as significant to some students. The teacher that makes the learning environment warm and inviting regardless of the difficulty of the assignment, influences the self-concept of students. The student who has a history of success in school is likely to risk success again and again when tackling new concepts, whether they fail is not important because their self-concept will allow them to try for future successes. The research literature is filled with data indicating that cognitive learning increases when the self-concept increases. According to Sampson and Allen (1991) the majority of students express most of their deepest feelings through vicarious experiences. One experience in expressing such self-concept may lead to confidence in other forms of self expression through role playing or conversing.

Thus, when students believed that they can be successful and the teacher believed the students can be successful, their beliefs resulted in increased intellectual

gains (Burden and Parrish 1983). One study that focused on exceptional and normal children's description of themselves showed that students classified as normal, physically handicapped, learning disabled and emotionally disturbed, were asked to evaluate themselves on a personal attribute inventory. Very few variations existed in self perception. Even when the exceptional children were grouped together and compared with the normal children, their self-descriptions were statistically independent according to Burden and Parish (1983). This study also suggested that the negative stereotyping of exceptional children held by teachers and others may not be adopted by the exceptional children themselves the way people think they are.

One idea that surfaced often was that the self-concept was developed and maintained through the social group in which the individual resided. This idea would suggest that the self-concept and academic achievement could best be understood in the context of the students' social environment, and not in their academic achievement (Black 1974).

Also, according to Black (1974) in his study on self-concept as related to achievement and age in learning disabled children, data revealed that learning disabilities and problems in self-concept are associated in a circular fashion. This relationship seemed to be significant to those children whose learning disabilities were not adequately identified and remedied early in school. Black's study also implied that

older children with learning disabilities tended to view more negatively than similar younger children on self-concept and that children tended to view themselves personally in part by their adequacy to their school performance. An effort should be made to deal with both the learning problem and problems in self-concept (Festinger 1954). It was recommended in his study that more integration of academic and emotional remedial programs should be more adequately used.

Conflicting ideas in research on the self-concept of exceptional students portray a realistic self-concept as one's ability to accurately appraise one's own strength and weakness. Studies on the self-concept and achievement on the gifted help to illustrate the dynamic nature of self-concept and its relationship to the child's social and educational environment. Festinger's study indicated that the tendency to compare oneself with a specific other depends on the perceived similarities between people. However, gifted students are more apt to make judgments about themselves in relationship to other gifted students than to less abled students. Considerable confusion about the measurement of self-concept has made assessing difficult for the exceptional child, according to early research done by Festinger (1954).

Self-Concept Relationship to Other Self-Concept Measures

Age, Sex and Grade

A number of theorists have predicted changes in self-

concept in relation to the age of the examinee. Wylie (1979), in a review of the literature, noted that the majority of studies did not support an association between age and self-concept for persons between the ages of 8 and 23. More recently, Harter (1983) suggested the stability of self-concept may relate to contextual factors like environmental demands, performance expectation and one's social comparison group, and that these related to age changes, e.g., transition from primary to junior high school. Studies involving homogeneous population, however, have found self-concept to differ according to age and grade. Jesede (1982a) observed a nonlinear relationship between age and self-concept in children. Self-concept scores in his study increased between ages 11 and 13, declined gradually from age 14, dropped sharply in ages 16 and 17 and then rose. Significance test of these observed differences were not reported.

Studies of students with sex differences and self-concept found no significant differences in early studies. However, Stopper (1978) examined the relation between self-concept and achievement, sex, grade level and membership in a self-contained program for the gifted. Stopper found significant sex differences, with females scoring higher on self-concept than males.

Intelligence and Achievement

Interest in the relationship between self-concept and academic performance has been extensive. Purkey (1970),

summarized the literature on self-concept and academic achievement by stating,

> "There is a persistent and significant relationship between the self-concept and academic achievement" and that change in one seems to have association with change in the other."

Recently, Shavelson and Bolas (1982) used structural equation modeling to examine the causal predominance of self-concept and achievement. A hierarchical model of self-concept referred to a model in which inferences about the self in general are at the apex and perceptions of self become increasingly specific as one descends the hierarchy. The model investigated in the study consisted of the general self-concept as measured by the Piers and Harris academic self-concept, and subject-specific self-concept. Achievement was measured for grades in Math, English and Science. The study results strongly supported the causal predominance of self-concept over achievement and supported the hierarchical model of self-concept. The authors cautioned about generalizing due to the sample size. Reck (1980) compared the self-concept of rural and urban sixth graders. No significant relationships were found between achievement and the total score or between achievement and any of the six cluster scales. Reck reported that school related notions of the self, either explicitly stated or implied were the single most important area contributing to the more negative self-concept of rural children. In summary most studies investigating the relationship between self-concept and achievement provided

inconclusive evidence. Moderate correlations between achievement and global self-concept were reported by the majority of studies.

Assertions of positive relationship between socio-economic status and overall self-concept have not been supported. Osborne's and LeGette's (1982) study using SES and self-concept revealed few differences in mean scores observed. A study by Smith, Zingale and Coleman (1978) investigated the relationship of social economic status (SES), academic achievement and self- concept in learning disabled students in special education classes. No significant effect for SES on self-concept was reported, but an inverse trend was observed. High SES students had low self-concepts and low SES students, had the highest self-concept. Rationale for this difference stated that expectancy performance discrepancy resulted in the lowered self-concepts.

Self-concept of exceptional children has focused on whether exceptional groups, differ from their normal functioning peers in self-concept. The influence of special educational setting on self-concept has been examined as well. No consistent finding within the exceptional groups have been reported.

Studies using ethnic and minority groups suggested that race per se is not a main determinant of self-concept, and that simple comparison studies with white children are not very profitable. It would seem more useful to look within

various racial groups for variables which influence self-concept (Ward and Bram 1972).

Summary of Literature

Some researchers have found correlations between self-concept and academic achievement, others have not. There seems to be as much concern for a correlation as there are disagreement about the correlations.

There are numerous studies done of varied exceptionalities but few disagree on the wild array of conflicting evidence. There were some common generalities noted among the studies, i.e., the peer group, sex and mainstreaming possibilities can affect the self-concept of most exceptionalities. The extent of whether these could produce negative or positive self concept lend itself to further research. Also, significant others as seen by exceptional students can affect the possibility of producing positive or negative self-concept. The self-concept is still a conflicting phenomena. Whether it correlates with academic achievement in a positive or negative manner suggests its significance in the educational arena. As long as research in the field of self-concept and academic achievement exist, and conflicting data is acknowledged, the professionals in education must understand or try to understand some possible causes of this conflict. The self-concept is a variable affected by almost everything in life, how much warrants further investigation.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This study analyzed the data obtained from two instruments named in the first chapter in this paper. This chapter gives a description of the methodology of the study and data related to specific questions that are to be answered to complete the study. Two types of data were involved, primary and secondary. The primary data was original data generated by the test instrument and observation. The secondary data consisted of review of related literature and research on the subject.

The descriptive design was selected because this design revealed a detailed description of the population studied. The descriptive method allowed the researcher to describe persons or situation as they existed, which allowed one to make predictions and decide if a total or a sample of the population should be studied. In order to determine if a correlation existed between severely emotionally disturbed adolescents' self-concept and their academic achievement, which states the purpose of this study, a detailed description of the population and the test instrument were specified. This information assisted the researcher in making decision

based on the correlation analysis, probability level and on previous related literature.

Subjects and Procedures

The population for this study consisted of students who had been tested and placed in a severely emotionally disturbed adolescent program based on the states' criteria for eligibility for SED program. These students were educated at a psychoeducational center due to the severity, intensity and frequency of their inappropriate behavior. The subjects consist of 21 males and 6 females. The ages are from 13 to 17. Due to the severity of the population chosen and chronic absenteeism, all housed at the Center could not be included in the study. Out of the total population of 36 adolescents, 30 permission slips were returned, however, 27 subjects (75 percent) were available for testing at the Center.

The procedures used consisted of the following: 1) Permission was secured from the director of the psychoeducational center to do the study; 2) Individuals were identified in the adolescent program that met the following criteria: (a) they were identified as severely emotionally disturbed adolescents; (b) they obtained a signed parental permission slip; 3) All permission slips were numbered and labeled with subject names, ages, and sex to be used as indicators on their test forms.

In accordance with the identified procedures, the researcher collected the permission slips that were returned

to the Center and divided them into groups. Two groups were tested the next day. The first two groups consisted of 9 subjects. The last group had 9 subjects the following day. All groups were tested in the afternoon and given the same explanation read by the researcher (see explanation of direction in the Appendix).

On the Piers-Harris Self-Concept there are 80 declarative statements. Items were written at the third grade level, both positive and negative statements were included. Students were given a pencil and asked to respond by circling a yes if the statements read by the researcher described them, and a no, if the statement read did not describe them according to their own feelings (Piers, Harris 1984).

After all statements were read, the students were asked to check their survey by making sure all statements were answered. The surveys were taken up by the researcher and the students were thanked and dismissed.

The dependent variable in the study is the total test scores on the PIAT-R. The total test scores are the combined achievement scores on all the subtests. It is also the scores that are being measured by the researcher to detect any correlation as measured by the independent variable, which are the scores on the Piers-Harris Self Concept Scale. That scale also used six different cluster scales scores. The cluster scale score reflects the child's assessment of his or her ability with respect to intellectual and academic tasks

including their satisfaction with school and their future expectations. A low score on the scales suggests specific difficulties with school related tasks. Children with high scores representing good achievement may be having difficulties with having too higher expectations from parents. By the same token children with low achievement level scores on a scale may be victims of the "self-fulfilling prophecy." On the Piers-Harris test there are also built-in mechanisms for acquiring true constructs. Since adolescents are the target populations, there is a tendency to fake answers or answer the way people think others want them to answer. The cluster scale scores are used to combat a certain amount of faking. There are also different numbers of statements within each sub-scale to detect inconsistent responding (Piers, Harris 1984).

Instruments

The first instrument used was the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale Revised. This scale is designed to give an overall picture of students' general self-concept. The self-concept scale represents a multi dimension which is reflected on six area scale scores. These area scale scores are utilized because students have many dimensions that create their self-concept. Areas of dimension included in the cluster scores are "behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance, anxiety, popularity, happiness, and satisfaction." This study focuses on intellectual and school

status, because it represents the student's own assessments of his or her ability on school test and his or her satisfaction with school as a whole. Raw scores on this test range from 0 to 80 with 80 representing the highest score, indicating a more positive self-concept. The total raw scores were the total number of responses marked in the positive direction.

The second instrument used was the Peabody Individual Achievement Test Revised (PIAT-R). The PIAT-R is an educational test used to provide an array of achievement levels. Only total test scores will be used for comparison with the self-concept scale. The PIAT-R is an individual administered achievement test that provides a wide range of assessments in six content areas. Each subtest covers a wide range of achievement level from preschool to post high school. The general information subtest measures the subject's general intellectual knowledge. The reading recognition is an oral test of reading from recognizing the sound associated with the printed letter. The math uses multiple choice concepts and facts ranging from recognizing number to solving geometry problems (Markwardt 1989).

"Two composites summarize the subject total achievement. Total reading--a combination of reading recognition, and reading comprehension--an overall measure of a student's reading ability." The total test score describes the subjects overall level of achievement. The total test scores will be converted to grade equivalent score for test interpretation

and comparison with PH self-concept scores. The PIAT-R scores are useful whenever a survey of a person's scholastic attainment is needed. When more intensive assessment is required the PIAT-R may assist the examiner in selecting a diagnostic instrument appropriate to the achievement level of the subject.

"Individual evaluation of the test provides insight into the subject's existing knowledge, educational strengths, and weaknesses. Through careful observation, insight may also be gained into how the subject handles problems and task into more general behavior patterns and attitude" (Piers, Harris 1984).

Data Analyses

This section focuses on how the data will be analyzed for discussion. The two variables used for study were self-concept and grade equivalent. A self-concept scale was administered to 27 SED adolescents educated at a psychoeducational center. Then, each student's grade equivalent score on the Peabody Test of academic achievement was obtained to be correlated with the Piers-Harris Self-Concept score. A correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the two variables, grade equivalent and self-concept.

A correlation using the Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient was obtained for PH mean score and the PB mean scores. Other variables i.e., sex and age were correlated and

discussed in the summary section. To analyze the data, descriptive tables were used to aid in interpretation and to aid in answering the research questions, which were to determine the range of correlation between self-concept and academic achievement. Table 1 gives detailed description of the population under study. The other tables show the correlations done and explain each result obtained.

Statistical Procedure

The statistical procedure consisted of the following:

1. The cluster scale scores on the PH self-concept test were added and totaled to get a total raw PH score.
2. A code for males (1) and (2) for females were assigned.
3. The PH mean score and PB mean score for all the students were calculated.
4. A mean correlation for PH self-concept and the mean PB achievement score on the test were calculated.
5. The correlation was determined by calculating a correlation analysis for the PH self-concept PB achievement score, then correlated sex and age to PB achievement scores.
6. The range of the relationships were determined by observing the + sign of the results. Also correlations were calculated for PH and age, and PB and age and PH to sex.

7. The probability level was indicated to denote if the results were very significant. The probability level must be greater than .05 for each correlation to be statistically significant.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the research done and to discuss the research questions presented in chapter one.

In this study, out of a total of 36 adolescents 27 students (75 percent) were available to be tested. Twenty-one males and 6 females between the ages of 13 and 17 (see table 1) for a breakdown of the total population. The total number of students by age and sex (see table 2) which shows the number of students in each category who took part in the test.

TABLE 1

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

STUDENTS RAW SCORES ON PB AND PH PERCENTILE SCORES AND ID NUMBER

ID	Sex	Age	Raw PH	%ile	PB
1	2	13	39	68	4.7
2	2	15	51	44	3.9
3	2	14	60	71	5.8
4	2	14	62	74	4.2
5	2	14	71	94	4.3

TABLE 1--Continued

ID	Sex	Age	Raw PH	%ile	PB
6	2	15	69	91	3.9
7	1	13	47	30	3.5
8	1	13	52	46	3.6
9	1	14	49	38	4.2
10	1	14	61	71	4.3
11	1	14	72	95	4.4
12	1	14	75	98	6.2
13	1	15	69	91	5.1
14	1	15	70	89	5.0
15	1	16	69	91	4.9
16	1	16	70	93	3.9
17	1	15	51	44	4.5
18	1	14	49	38	6.2
19	1	16	62	74	5.7
20	1	17	65	82	3.9
21	1	17	60	69	3.3
22	1	15	75	98	3.7
23	1	17	41	21	4.0
24	1	16	40	20	4.0
25	1	14	43	24	4.2
26	1	15	77	99	4.9
27	1	15	68	89	3.8

N	=	Total number of students
No. 2	=	Females
No. 1	=	Males
ID	=	Identification number of students on the test
PH	=	Piers Harris Self-Concept Score
PB	=	Peabody Achievement Test Scores converted to grade point averages

This table represents students total raw scores on the PH which used a range from 0 to 80. The higher the raw score the higher the self-concept. Low scores suggest a lower self-concept because the test was scored in the positive direction. Average scores were between the 31st and 70 percentile. The normal value for determining the significant deviation for the mean was a $\pm$ 1 standard deviation.

TABLE 2

BREAKDOWN OF STUDENTS TESTED BY AGE AND SEX

Males	N	Females	N
13	2	13	1
14	6	14	3
15	6	15	2
16	4	16	0
17	3	17	0
Total	21		6

N = number of students tested in each category
Total (both) 27

This table represents the number of students tested by age and sex who took part in the research. There were more boys than girls tested. However, there are more boys in the total population than girls.

TABLE 3

PH SELF-CONCEPT MEAN SCORE WITH THEIR SEPARATE PERCENTILE LEVEL BY SEX

N	PH Mean	%ile
	Male	
21	60.1	69%
	Female	
6	58.6	63%

This table represents the mean self-concept score for males and females and their percentile level. Average scores according to the PH manual show that the average percentile scores were between the 31st and 70th percentile.

The males in this test average PH score was (60). This score fell within the average percentile range indicating that most of these students had rather average self-concept scores. The female mean scores (58) were a little lower than the male score suggesting although there were less females than males, perhaps their self-concept may be a little lower than the males.

In this study the Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Coefficient was used because it denotes the association of pairs. The pairs in this study were self-concept and grade equivalent scores. The coefficient tells the magnitude of the relationship by using a range of a plus or negative one. A zero means no relationship exists. The closer the value is to plus or minus one the stronger the relationship between the pairs. The coefficient only tells you if a relationship exists and not the cause.

In this study the following results were noted (see table 4).

TABLE 4

CORRELATION MEANS FOR AGE, PH, AND PB SCORES

	Age	PH	SD	PB	SD
Mean	14.8	59.8	11.8	4.4	7.9

This table represents the mean correlation for the total group tested. The mean PH score was 59.8 which shows an average self-concept level for the group. The designated range for self-concept scores are 0 to 80 with 80 representing high scores indicating higher self-concepts. The PH score 59.8 also falls in the average percentile level. The mean score for PH self-concept was 59.8 with a standard deviation of 11.8. The mean score for PB grade equivalent was 4.4 with a standard deviation of 7.9. On the Piers-Harris average scores were between the 31st and 70th percentile. The normal value

for determining the significant deviation from the mean is +1 standard deviation. The resulting PH mean was below the 70th percentile indicating an overall low average self-concept score for the total population.

Data Analysis

In order to address the research questions, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated. This statistical procedure allowed the researcher to determine if the relationships being studied were significant. Tables 5 and 6 present the statistical findings of the study.

TABLE 5

PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION OF SELF-CONCEPT AS MEASURED BY THE PIERS-HARRIS SCALE AND SELECTED FACTORS

Factors	N	Mean	SD	r	Probability
Age	27	14.8	1.17	.14	.457
Sex	27	1.22	.424	-.05	.293

$p<.05$

The statistical analyses yielded correlations of .14 for age and -.05 for sex. These coefficient scores indicate weak relationships. In order to determine if the relationships were statistically significant, the probability level for each was calculated. Because the probability levels for each of the calculated correlations exceeded the acceptable level of

.05, the correlations of .14 for age and -.05 for sex are not significant.

TABLE 6

PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AS MEASURED BY THE PEABODY ACHIEVEMENT TEST (PB) AND SELECTED FACTORS

Factors	N	Mean	SD	r	Probability
Piers-Harris	27	59.814	11.82	.171	.394
Age	27	14.8	1.17	-.175	.384
Sex	27	1.22	.424	.013	.950

pc.05

The statistical analyses yielded correlations of .171 for self-concept, -.175 for age, and .013 for sex. The coefficients indicate weak relationships. In order to determine if the correlations were statistically significant, probability levels were calculated for each. Because the probability levels for each of the calculated correlations exceeded the acceptable level of .05, the correlations of .171 for the Piers Harris, -.175 for age and .013 for sex are not significant.

Summary of Statistical Analyses

The five correlational analyses indicate that there is no statistically significant relationship between self-concept as measured by the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale and age, sex,

and academic achievement for severely emotionally disturbed adolescents. Further, there is no statistically significant relationship between academic achievement as measured by the Peabody Achievement Test and age, sex, or self-concept.

H_1: Therefore, the first null hypotheses was accepted. There was a relationship but the probability level indicates the relationship was not significant in this study.

H_2: The second hypotheses was also accepted. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between age and self-concept.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the research questions and result obtained in this study, and to discuss any recommendations that can be developed as a result of this study.

The questions guiding this study were: 1) What is the range of the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of SED adolescents educated at a psychoed center? 2) Does age have an impact on the self-concept of those students? 3) Does this study support other research on achievement and self-concept?

Summary and Conclusion

To discuss the first question on the range of the relationship between self-concept and achievement, one must refer to table 5. The first correlation was .+17 which is very weak but positive. This means that the range of the relationship between the two variables showed that grade equivalent did influence the self-concept in a positive direction, but the result is too weak to draw any long generalization or conclusions because of the smallness of the

sample size. Also a perfect relationship would have to be indicated by obtaining a correlation index of a plus or minus one. Results obtained were less in this study. Grade equivalent at this psychoed center did not correlate highly with self-concept.

The second question asked, did age have an impact on self-concept and achievement? The result yields the following correlations r = +.14 (see table 5). This correlation was also low, but positive. This indicates that as one's age increased the correlation of self-concept and achievement did not influence the correlation of self-concept and achievement in this study. This result was also too small to draw significant conclusions due to sample size. Perhaps a larger sample would produce different results.

The third question was, does this research support other literature on self-concept and achievement? Referring to the review of literature section, one can see that it does support some researchers.

Stopper (1978), in his study between self-concept and achievement, sex, grade level and membership in a self-contained program for the gifted showed that females scored higher on self-concept than males. In this study the opposite was noted (see table 3). Females mean PH score was lower than the males P.H scores although there were more males than females in this study. Another area of the literature that supported the findings of this study was conducted by Burden

and Parish (1983). Their research consisted of emotionally disturbed students, learning disabled students and normal children giving a description of themselves based on a personal attribute scale. These researchers' result showed that the normal children description of themselves were statistically independent and very few variations existed in all their self perception scores.

Results of this study indicate that the correlation of self-concept and achievement was about the same for the girls and boys and was very closely related when age was used as a factor. Thus, supporting findings that perhaps the negative stereotyping of exceptional children held by teachers and others may not be adopted by the exceptional children the way people think they are. Another finding that help supported this research was held by Rogers, Smith and Coleman (1978). Their research revealed that the self-concept and achievement can be understood both in the student social environment and not in their academic achievement. Research findings also support this statement because the correlation was very low as a whole and most students' scores seem to cluster around the same percentile. Perhaps all the students in this study felt the same way when it came to comparing their self-concepts. This study supports Lewis' (1972) findings that stated when a relationship was reported between self-concept and achievement the correlation was low. The correlation for this study revealed .+17, which represented a very low relationship

between self-concept and achievement. This study also supports the social comparison theory. That theory represented an association between the child's relative standing when compared to that of his classmates. This theory also suggests that self-concept and achievement can best be obtained within the child's social environment and how he perceives this standing in terms of his academic achievement. This is important for students educated at a psychoed center and not in a regular classroom setting. This indicated that given guidance any student could develop a positive self-concept regardless of his grade equivalent or placement.

It is evident that future research is needed in the area of self-concept and achievement due to changing society and other variables that often impact upon it. My findings supported some early literature as well as refuted some of the literature which suggested that the self-concept is just as complicated today as it was in the past. The literature is filled with conflicting data on self-concept and achievement. Some studies did suggest that teachers played a significant role in helping students develop a positive self-concept. Although students with positive self-concepts were not always the best students academically. For this reason many recommendations are in order.

Recommendations

The recommendations are:

1. Schools should provide more research on self

concept of exceptional children and use this research to plan program curriculum and disciplinary programs.

2. Include in group counseling sessions, self-concept developmental plans for students.
3. Provide follow-up studies of students who have already gone through self-concept sessions when they first enter psychoed center.
4. Instill in students the importance of being honest with themselves when taking self-concept surveys.
5. Provide conferences with parents on the correlation of self-concept and achievement of students with explanations telling why one of these might not affect the other.
6. Provide students with studies that explain why or how the self-concept may be affected by other variables in their lives.

A P P E N D I C E S

Appendix A

Permission Letter to Parents

October 9, 1990

Dear Parents,

Periodically, South Metro has teachers who request student participation in a research project related to developing their professional knowledge.

One of our teachers has requested to use the Adolescent Students in such a research project. It would involve having students answer Yes or No to questions regarding self-concept. Only a summary of the results will be presented in their report. Students will not be identified by name or school.

Please check the statement below granting or not granting parental permission for your child to participate and return to Marie Deisler. If you have any further questions, please contact me at 762-7900.

Sincerely,

Marie Deisler
Treatment Coordinator

MD/sm

_____ I give my permission for my child to participate in the project.

_____ I do not wish for my child to participate in the research project.

Appendix B

Response Read to Students

"Hello, my name is Toni Johnson. I am a graduate student in the Atlanta University graduate program. I am presently completing a paper on self-concept. I need your support to complete my study. All I need you to do is to be honest on a self-concept survey. This survey gives you a chance to tell how you feel about yourself personally on paper. All information is confidential, meaning no one will see it except me to complete my paper. No names are needed so you can be sure no one will know who you are. I would like your honest feeling. All you have to do is answer by circling Yes or No to statements. I will read to you. In surveys only the answers are important, not who answered them. Are there any questions?"

Questions Asked	Response
1.	
2.	
3.	

Appendix C

Self-Concept Survey

	Yes	No
My classmates make fun of me.	____	____
I am a happy person.	____	____
It is hard for me to make friends.	____	____
I am often sad.	____	____
I am smart.	____	____
I am shy.	____	____
I get nervous when the teacher calls on me.	____	____
My looks bother me.	____	____
When I grow up, I will be an important person.	____	____
I get worried when we have tests in school.	____	____
I am unpopular.	____	____
I am well behaved in school.	____	____
It is usually my fault when something goes wrong.	____	____
I cause trouble to my family.	____	____
I am strong.	____	____
I have good ideas.	____	____
I am an important member of my family.	____	____
I usually want my own way.	____	____
I am good at making things with my hands.	____	____
I give up easily.	____	____
I am good in my school work.	____	____
I do many bad things.	____	____
I can draw well.	____	____
I am good in music.	____	____
I behave badly at home.	____	____
I am nervous.	____	____
I am an important member of my class.	____	____
I have pretty eyes.	____	____
I can give a good report in front of the class.	____	____
In school I am a dreamer.	____	____
I pick on my brother(s) and sister(s).	____	____
My friends like my ideas.	____	____
I often get into trouble.	____	____
I am obedient at home.	____	____
I am lucky.	____	____
I worry a lot.	____	____
My parents expect too much of me.	____	____

I like being the way I am.	____	____
I feel left out of things.	____	____
I have nice hair.	____	____
I often volunteer in school.	____	____
I wish I were different.	____	____
I sleep well at night.	____	____
I hate school.	____	____
I am among the last to be chosen for games.	____	____
I am sick a lot.	____	____
I am often mean to other people.	____	____
My classmates in school think I have good ideas.	____	____
I am unhappy.	____	____
I have many friends.	____	____
I am cheerful.	____	____
I am dumb about most things.	____	____
I am good-looking.	____	____
I have lots of pep.	____	____
I get into a lot of fights.	____	____
I am popular with boys.	____	____
People pick on me.	____	____
My family is disappointed with me.	____	____
I have a pleasant face.	____	____
When I try to make something, everything seem to go wrong.	____	____
I am picked on at home.	____	____
I am a leader in games and sports.	____	____
I am clumsy.	____	____
In games and sports, I watch instead of play.	____	____
I forget what I learn.	____	____
I am easy to get along with.	____	____
I lose my temper easily.	____	____
I am popular with girls.	____	____
I am a good reader.	____	____
I would rather work alone than with a group.	____	____
I like my brother (sister).	____	____
I have a good figure.	____	____
I am often afraid.	____	____
I am always dropping or breaking things.	____	____
I can be trusted.	____	____
I am different from other people.	____	____
I think bad thoughts.	____	____
I cry easily.	____	____
I am a good person	____	____

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